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PRESS RELEASE

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Davis announces new I-65 and S.R. 14 interchange

(NEWTON COUNTY) -- Lieutenant Governor Kathy Davis today announced the construction of a new interchange serving Jasper, Pulaski and Newton counties at I-65 and S.R. 14. The \$5.5 million investment will not only improve access for residents, visitors and commercial enterprises to the state highway system, but also stimulate economic development, tourism and jobs in the region.

The announcement came as part of the grand opening ceremonies for the Fair Oaks Dairy Adventure. A consortium of dairies, led by Fair Oaks Dairy Farms, LLC, opened the \$7 million visitor's center on December 10, 2003, to educate the public about dairy farming. It is located just west of I-65 along S.R. 14.

"This new highway interchange opens the door for new agribusiness and tourism development in this area and further ensures our state's economic development," said Davis. "The unique partnership of state and local government with the private sector will serve residents for many years to come."

INDOT officially programmed the interchange for development in spring 2002. It received final approval from the Federal Highway Administration for inclusion on the National Interstate System late last year.

Newton County is providing up to \$250,000 for the design of the interchange. Fair Oaks Dairy Farm, LLC is donating the right of way upon which the project will be built.

"As soon as we had approval from the Federal Highway Administration, we accelerated the development of this project," said INDOT Commissioner J. Bryan Nicol. "It is INDOT's intention to accept bids for the construction contract this fall, which should allow for the interchange to open to

traffic by 2005.”

The interchange will provide improved access to I-65 for tanker trucks, which carry milk between dairy farms in Newton and Jasper counties to processors, primarily in the Chicago area. This will provide relief for the county road systems, which now serve as routes to the current interstate interchanges at S.R. 10 and S.R. 114. On a daily basis, these trucks carry the milk of 25,000 dairy cows, which produce enough milk to fill more than four million glasses. Newton and Jasper counties estimate the new interchange will reduce their road maintenance costs by \$2 million.